

INS San Jose News

Spring 2001

Status Inquiry Fax Service a Success!!

Tired of waiting in line to check the status of your case? In March 2000, the INS San Jose office unveiled a fax status inquiry service for customers with pending N-400 (citizenship) or I-485 (adjustment of status) applications. As a result, the number of customers traveling to the INS office to inquire about the status of their cases has dropped almost in half.

In February 2000, approximately 21 percent of the total number of customers who came to the INS San Jose office simply wanted to find out what was happening with their case. We wanted to save our customers a trip to the INS office and a wait in line. So, our IIOs began answering hundreds of status inquiries every month via fax. As a result, by January 2001, only 9 percent of our customers had travelled to the San Jose office to check the status of their cases. *(Cont'd next page.)*



San Jose INS to Open on Saturday, March 24, 2001

The INS San Jose Sub Office will open on Saturday, March 24, 2001 from 7:00 AM until 11:00 AM to serve the general public. San Jose is the site of an Immigration and Naturalization Service customer service pilot project. As an initiative of the pilot project, we are opening on Saturday to serve those customers who would find it difficult to visit our office during regular business hours.

We will provide our usual daily services. This means that our customers will be able to:

- ask general information questions;
- renew and apply for work permits;
- apply for replacement green cards;
- submit adjustment of status applications;
- apply for advance parole; and
- inquire about citizenship and adjustment of status cases.

The INS Information Officers will assist customers on a first-come first-serve basis. Any customers who would like to turn in an application or who require complex immigration assistance will be given a number to speak with an immigration officer. If we run out of numbers for the day, we still will provide forms and simple information until we close at 11:00 AM.

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Status Inquiry Fax Directions



You may send a fax to inquire about the status of your case to 408-918-3947, and we will provide a faxed or written response. Please note, we will only be able to send you information if you live in the San Jose service area (San Benito, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and Monterey counties) and meet one of the following conditions:

- You filed your N-400 citizenship application *more* than two ½ years ago.
- You had a citizenship interview *more* than six months ago and you haven't heard from INS.
- You filed an I-485 family-based adjustment of status application *more* than 2 years ago.

Sample Information to Include in Your Fax

- ☐ **Name:** _____
- ☐ **Type of Application You Filed (I-485 or N-400):** _____
- ☐ **A-Number:** _____
- ☐ **Fax Number:** _____
- ☐ **Interview Date:** _____
- ☐ **Date Application was Filed:** _____
- ☐ **Current Address:** _____
- ☐ **Telephone Number:** _____



Volunteer Opportunity!

Citizenship Ceremonies at the San Jose Civic Auditorium

Becoming a U.S. citizen is often one of the most important events in an immigrant's life. The U.S. Immigration & Naturalization Service holds citizenship ceremonies for approximately 3,000 people every month, and we need your help! Please volunteer as an usher at an upcoming ceremony.

March 28, 2001

April 25, 2001

May 30, 2001

June 20, 2001

July 24, 2001

August 22, 2001

Please e-mail us at insvolunteer@yahoo.com if you would like to volunteer as an usher for an oath ceremony. (Please reserve four hours of volunteer time for each ceremony -- from 7:30 – 11:30 AM.)



Customer Service Laboratory

Spotlight on Workshops



The INS launched a customer service pilot project at the San Jose Office in the Spring of 1999. The pilot project enables us to test new customer- driven ideas without the usual red tape.

In September 1999, the INS San Jose Office launched a unique series of workshops for the public on a wide variety of immigration topics such as

- Green Card Renewal
- Becoming a Permanent Resident
- Citizenship
- Bringing Family to the United States
- Travel Documents

Typically, customers who visit the INS must stand in line to ask questions of Immigration Information Officers on a first-come first-served basis. The goal of the workshops is to provide the public an opportunity to ask questions of immigration officers without standing in line. Additionally, each workshop lasts approximately two hours, which allows the public to gain a more comprehensive overview of a topic than an Immigration Officer would be able to provide in the typical INS setting.

The format of the workshops are simple. An INS immigration officer makes a 20-30 minute presentation on a topic such as “the citizenship process,” and then opens the floor to questions and answers from the audience. The audience has found this format to be helpful, because they learn new information by listening to the questions of other customers.

We have experimented with presentation formats for the workshops. For instance, although we primarily conduct presentations in English, we have also held workshops in Spanish and Vietnamese. Working in partnership with the staff of the San Jose Catholic Charities’ office, INS provided the meeting space and materials, and Catholic Charities provided immigration experts to deliver the presentations in the audience-appropriate language.

This spring, we are launching an effort to bring INS workshops into the community. We are working with educational institutions, immigration services providers, and public libraries to find venues to host INS-led presentations. We believe that there is an ongoing need for better dispersion of immigration information to the residents of the counties we serve.

The public has found the workshops to be informative and useful. Approximately 90% of attendees rate the workshops as good or excellent, and all the participants who have completed satisfaction surveys feel that INS should continue to offer this service to the community.



INS
SPRING WORKSHOP SERIES



INS officers will be conducting each workshop, which are free and open to the public. You do not have to wait in line. Please call 408-918-3986 for reservations.

March 12, 2001 - Citizenship

Time: 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Language: Presented by INS in English with Vietnamese and Mandarin translation.

Place: John 23rd Senior Center
195 E. San Fernando Street
San Jose, CA 95112-3503

**March 20, 2001 -
Citizenship/LIFE Act**

Time: 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Language: Presented by INS in Spanish

Place: Salinas Adult Education
20 Sherwood Place
Salinas, CA 93906

**March 20, 2001 -
Becoming a Permanent Resident
/LIFE Act**

Time: 3:00 – 5:00 PM

Language: Presented by INS in English

Place: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Main
Library
McDaniel Room
180 West San Carlos Street
San Jose, CA 95113

**April 11, 2001 -
Bringing Family to the United States**

Time: 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Language: Presented by INS in English

Place: INS Office
1887 Monterey Road
San Jose, CA 95112

May 16, 2001 - Citizenship

Time: 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Language: Presented by INS in English

Place: INS Office
1887 Monterey Road
San Jose, CA 95112

May 19, 2001 - Citizenship

Time: 9:00 – 11:00 AM

Language: Presented by INS in English

Place: County Citizenship Day
Call reservation line for more info .

**May 29, 2001 -
Becoming a Permanent Resident**

Time: 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Language: Presented by INS in English
with Spanish translation

Place: Catholic Charities
2625 Zanker Road, Suite 201
San Jose, CA 95134

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: MOBILE OUTREACH VISITS

Q: What is a Mobile Outreach visit?

A: For a few days each month, INS Immigration Information Officers travel to the communities we serve to save our customers a trip to the San Jose INS office.

Q: What is an Immigration Information Officer?

A: Our Immigration Information Officers (IIO) usually serve the walk-in public at our office in San Jose. They provide information to the public about immigration and nationality law and regulations. They assist with information necessary to complete required forms and explain the administrative procedures and normal processing times for each application.

Q: What services are provided at the mobile outreach?

A: The Immigration Information Officers in our mobile outreach unit will answer your general immigration questions, provide INS forms, and accept inquiries on the status of naturalization applications. In addition, we will accept complete adjustment of status applications. We will process INS Form I-90 applications to replace Green Cards that have been lost, stolen, or damaged (All customers with green cards that are undamaged *and* have expired or are expiring within six months should go to the nearest ASC to renew their cards.) The officers can only accept checks or money orders for application fees.

Q: Where are the mobile outreach sites?

A: We travel to four cities: Gilroy, Hollister, Salinas and Watsonville.

Q: Can I make an appointment?

A: We prefer that customers make an appointment for our mobile outreach visits. Any walk-in customers are seen at the discretion of the Immigration Information Officers. To make an appointment in:

Gilroy, please call:	408-842-4808.
Hollister, please call:	831-637-9293.
Salinas, please call:	831-422-0602
Watsonville, please call:	831-724-5667.

Q: When I call for an appointment, will an INS officer answer the phone?

A: No. Community organizations, such as the Santa Cruz County Immigration Project in Watsonville, provide office space for the INS officers and also make appointments for the mobile outreach.

Q: Where can I find upcoming outreach dates?

A: Our outreach dates will be listed at our website at:
<http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/fieldoffices/sanjose/community.htm>.

Q: What are the hours of the outreach?

A: The hours vary depending on the site, but we hold the outreaches during business hours. To learn what appointment times are still available, please call the numbers listed above.

Q: Why do the Immigration Information Officers write my name down at the outreach?

A: We use our sign-in sheet simply to find out how many people we serve a day during our outreach visits. This is the only purpose of the sign-in sheet.